

Washington, DC—Today, Congressman John Olver and Worcester Community Housing Resources, Inc. announced that the Heywood Wakefield 3 project has successfully secured financing and closed on the \$24 million project in downtown Gardner.

Heywood Wakefield 3 will convert a vacant mill building in downtown Gardner into a 78-unit, 100% affordable, assisted living facility serving the housing and daily living needs of low income seniors. The units will be constructed in a portion of the historic Heywood Wakefield furniture manufacturing facility. Two adjacent sections of this mill complex have been successfully converted into 171 units of elderly housing and 175 units of mixed income apartments.

Congressman Olver helped the project secure more than \$15 million in HUD grants over the last ten years. The project has received additional affordable housing subsidies from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. In addition, MassDevelopment issued tax-exempt bonds to partially fund the construction.

The housing will consist primarily of studio apartments and will have extensive common areas, including a living room, library, dining room, wellness center, activities space, and a country kitchen. Residents will receive assistance with activities of daily living and housekeeping. The building is conveniently located within walking distance to amenities in the town, including the central business district, library, municipal services, and medical/hospital facilities.

“Assisted living facilities are most commonly located in affluent, metropolitan communities and come at a significant cost to those who live there. Heywood Wakefield 3 is unique to Massachusetts because it will be 100% affordable and is located in a more rural area of the state. I am pleased to have been able to help bring these much needed services to low and moderate income seniors in my District,” said Congressman John Olver.

“Worcester Community Housing Resources is excited to be involved in such a great project. The rehabilitation of the Heywood Wakefield 3 building is a perfect example of how we meet our mission—increasing the supply of affordable housing and revitalizing neighborhoods. We would like to thank Congressman Olver, HUD, MassDevelopment, and the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and all of the local officials and

legislators who worked diligently to make this project happen,” said Matthew Wally, Executive Director of WCHR.

“The Heywood-Wakefield assisted living project has been a long time in the making, but the extraordinary efforts by all involved have finally succeeded. Special thanks go to Congressman Olver whose vision and determination have been a critical piece of these efforts. There is no doubt that this project is a major step in the downtown revitalization process. It not only restores a historic building that has been an eyesore and occasional public safety hazard for a long time, but it creates jobs and provide an affordable housing option to our elderly citizens who might otherwise have to live in a nursing home,” added Robert Hubbard Director of Gardner’s Department of Community Development and Planning.

Construction on the Heywood Wakefield 3 is expected to begin sometime next month.

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